

200 GA Trees

Among Georgia's 200 native trees, a few are unique to the state. They grow from the flanks of Lookout Mountain to the banks of King's Bay, signifying power, the state's founding, tenacious survival and even a myth.

If you want to plant some trees that symbolize the best and diversity of Georgia, five native trees fit the bill. They include the *Georgia hackberry* (Celtic tenuifolia), *franklinia* (Frankliniana altamaha), *Georgia oak* (Quercus georgiana), *Oglethorpe oak* (Quercus oglethorpensis) and *live oak* (Quercus virginiana).

Georgia hackberry is a small tree in the elm family. Unlike most of its relatives, Georgia hackberry has smooth leaf margins, or just a few teeth. It's naturally found on dry, rocky sites across central

Georgia. The crown of leaves the tree produces is usually asymmetrical and irregular.

The *franklinia tree*, of the tea family, was growing in a small area near the mouth of the Altamaha River when Georgia was being settled. Since that early discovery, no one has seen this tree in the wild. The nursery trade carries many forms of the tree, especially in Europe. Unfortunately, in Georgia and the United States it is listed as extinct. Franklinia is a small tree with dainty arching twigs and an unusual thin, striped bark. Its flowers are relatively large, cream-colored and shaped like a cup. Some suggest it was actually part of old, lost English tea plantation plots.

Georgia oak is a smallish, smooth-barked tree that ekes out a living on granite

outcrops. This harsh life has made Georgia oak tough and stress-tolerant. The beautiful little oak has bright, shiny green leaves like a dwarf red oak. Georgia oaks have nice fall color, are drought-tolerant and produce a small acorn wildlife love. They're found only on a few granite outcrops in the state.

Oglethorpe oak is named after Oglethorpe County, where it was first found, and the founder of Georgia, James Oglethorpe. This oak is one of the few that suffer from a disease similar to chestnut blight. But a number of trees reach medium and large stature without signs of the disease. This rare tree wasn't even discovered until this century. Oglethorpe oak has beautiful and strange, five-pointed, yellow hairs on the undersides

of its leaves. The tree is quite upright with long, oval leaves and distinct whitish, platy bark.

Live oak should need no introduction to any Georgia citizen. It's not unique to Georgia, but it's our state tree. Live oaks grow on the coastal plain but can be occasionally found in frost-protected plantings farther north. Live oak gave wooden ships their strength and shape. Our first forest reserves were naval live oak areas. The tree is characterized by large trunks and massive branches spreading over the landscape, draped in Spanish moss.

Plant a uniquely Georgia tree grove. Use native trees from our county or these Georgia heritage trees. Grow a piece of Georgia forest history.

Benefits of Trees

Economic Benefits

Enhance economic stability by attracting businesses and tourists. Forestry is one of Georgia's largest industries, contributing \$19.7 billion annually. Reduce heating and cooling costs. Trees can add up to 15% to residential property value. Individual private citizens own 72% of Georgia's forestland.

Social Benefits

Improve mental and physical health and well-being of people contribute to a sense of community pride and ownership

Provide privacy and a sense of solitude and security

Environmental Benefits

Clean water, conserves water, and reduces soil erosion. Sixty-six percent of Georgia's land consists of forests. Clean air, reduce air pollution Create wildlife and plant diversity. Georgia plants an average of 682,000 trees per day, almost two times more trees than are harvested. Modify local climate

United States Census, 2000

What do we get from trees?

For centuries, people saw trees only as lumber or firewood. In the process of making lumber, sawdust, bark, and wood scraps would be discarded. Eventually scientist studied the makeup of trees and discovered that all parts of a tree have an abundance of valuable chemicals. The forestry industry used this research to create new products. Trees can now be used in thousands of common consumer items that play a vital part in improving your health and everyday life. With today's technology, almost 100% of a tree can be used to make wood and other forest products.

Forest Products Uses

On average, each American will use approximately 3 pounds of wood products per day. Wood products make up 47% of all the raw materials manufactured in the United States but require only 4% of the energy used to manufacture those materials. With today's technology, almost 100% of a tree can be used to make wood and other forest products. More than 5,000 different consumer products are made with trees grown in Georgia. In addition to their use for lumber, building materials and paper, trees are processed into wood pulp, cellulose, and cellulose derivatives. These tree-based products are used in many ways that contribute to and improve the quality of our daily lives. Some of the items containing products made from trees include:

Food:

Ice cream and syrup makers use cellulose gum to give products a smooth and creamy texture. Fruits and nuts can be harvested from a wide variety of trees. Crackers can use high purity grade cellulose; even the cardboard box they are stored in for freshness is a tree product.

Pharmaceuticals and Personal Care Products:

Pain relieving caplets are coated with cellulose ethers that make them easier to swallow. Cough syrup and other liquid oral medicines are thickened by cellulose products for their even-flow consistency. Other products like shampoo and toothpaste contain methylcellulose for thickening. Bandage strips use tree gum as the adhesive to stick to skin. Combs and eyeglasses are made from pulp and cellulose that makes the plastic frame. Toilet tissue and toothpaste are also product derived from trees.

Clothing:

Dresses, shirts and ties made from rayon include fibers from viscose pulp made from trees.

Sports Equipment:

Baseball bats are made from wood and safety helmets are made from wood cellulose derivatives.

Other items:

Crayons, candles, sponges, chewing gum, photographic film, lipstick, make-up, nail polish, newspaper, magazines, paint, pencils, perfume, and tires all contain tree related products.

New Uses for Trees Emerging Technologies

Biomass Transportation Fuels Georgia's abundant forest resources are excellent sources for woody biomass. Biomass includes manufacturing wood wastes, logging slash and small diameter trees. The technology involved in converting woody biomass to ethanol and biodiesel is rapidly advancing. These renewable fuels could lessen Georgia's dependence on petroleum fuels.

Ethanol-Georgia Tech researchers are studying commercialization of an ethanol refinery.

Biodiesel-University of Georgia researchers are studying the conversion of biomass to biodiesel and other products.

Quick Facts

In 1937, the live oak was adopted as the official tree at the request of the Edmund Burke Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. It flourishes along the coastal plains and on the islands where the first settlers made their homes. Many famous Georgians, as early as General James Edward Oglethorpe, were able to enjoy its beauty.

Compost is one of nature's best mulches

Using compost improves soil structure, texture, aeration and increases the soil's water-holding capacity. Compost loosens clay soils and helps sandy soils retain water. Adding compost improves soil fertility and stimulates healthy root development in plants. The organic matter provided in compost provides food for microorganisms, which keeps the soil in a healthy, balanced condition.

Compost is the ultimate garden fertilizer and serves primarily as a soil conditioner. It contains virtually all the nutrients a living plant needs and delivers them in a slow-release manner over a period of years. A garden soil blended with compost is better able to hold air and water, drains more efficiently, and contains a nutrient reserve that plants can draw on. The soil also tends to produce plants with fewer insect and disease problems.

Fall is the best time to apply the compost, although an application in early spring is almost as effective.

Garden beds: One inch thick

New lawn: 2 to 3" layer of compost is best when planting. Once established, a 1/4 to 1/2" layer yearly will maintain the quality of the soil.

Existing lawn: Top-dressed with a 1/2" layer of compost every year or two

Trees and shrubs: 1/2" to 1" layer of compost on the bare soil under the tree as far as the drip line. Then cover with a 2-3" layer of some other kind of organic mulch, such as chopped leaves or pine needles.

Plantings: Perennial and annuals also benefit from compost at planting time.

Compost is free to residents and available for pick-up at the Richmond Hill Wastewater Treatment Facility located at 1701 Elbow Swamp Road. Compost is available for pick-up during regular hours of operation Monday-Friday 7 a.m.-5 p.m. when the gate is open. Residents are required to check-in before self loading the compost. Contact Al or Don @ 756-4282 with any questions.

